

**W IS
FOR WAR!**

A Zine By:
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FIND OUT WHAT "G"
IS FOR INSIDE!!!

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A is for America

B is for Bomb

C is for Censorship

D is for Democracy

W is for Waroka

X is for Xenophobia

Y is for Yes Men

Z is for (classified top secret information)

The Daily Show: A Critique on American Media and Government

By David Essman

As the body count rises everyday, Americans are treated to the latest atrocity to come out of the war on terror. Not surprisingly, the majority of news coverage is considerably depressing; but it doesn't have to be. Jon Stewart takes on the news Monday through Thursday on "The Daily Show." The show is dubbed as 'fake news,' and while it isn't as hard hitting as other news sources, "The Daily Show is in no way fake. The show points out the absurdities of America's media and government. Even though "The Daily Show" doesn't present viewers with any recent news, the show does present a well thought out critique on Americas media and system of government.

"The Daily Show" sorts through the rest of the media, and using snippets of news material, points out a recent absurdity. On an recent episode that aired on October 5, Stewart considers that perhaps President Bush's approval ratings are so low, not necessarily because he is doing a bad job, but rather American's don't understand what his job is, even though President Bush has tried very hard to tell Americans what his job entails. A clip is then shown in which Bush says " my job is to do two things; one remind people about the war on terror, and remind them that we're doing everything we can to protect them." i Stewart then talks about how Bush does in fact remind citizens about the war on terror every couple of years, and that he's done a good job of reminding Americans that protecting them is also a part of his job. Several clips in which Bush states his job is to defend the country are shown illustrating the point. Stewart continues to build off of his point showing various clips of Bush stating what his job is, until a clip is shown in which Bush states "One of the hardest parts of my job is to connect Iraq to the war on terror." ii Stewart's crowd reacted with an uproar of laughter, and rightfully so as Bush has stated in the past that Iraq is connected to the war on terror. Stewart takes the bit even further with a demonstration where he uses a prop electrical plug to represent Iraq in which he tries to connect it to the war on terror, which he represents with an avocado. "You can do it, you try hard enough you can shove it in there, you can get the plug to connect into the avocado, but here's the problem, the Avocado still doesn't turn on!" iii Stewart's "Daily Show," without sounding like just another nut job conspiracy theorist, denounces the connection between Iraq and the war on terror, not with straight opinion, but with Bush's own words.

During an episode which aired July 7, Stewart points out an absurdity of President Bush's recent veto of a stem cell research bill. He shows a clip in which President Bush says "I think it's important to promote a culture of life. I think a hospitable society is a society where every being counts and every person matters." iv Stewart repeats the last sentence of the clip and follows with a clip in with Bush answering a question about the war in Iraq, stating around 30,000 Iraqis

Q is for Quagmire
R is for Right
S is for secret Wire Tapping
T is for Torture
U is for USA
V is for Victory

Pundits

by: David Essman



K is for Kuwait

L is for Lies

M is for Moral Values

N is for National Security

O is for Operation Iraqi Freedom

P is for Patriot Act

E is for Explosion

F is for Freedom

G is for Genocide

H is for Humvee

I is for Intelligence

J is for Jihad

have died there. Jon Stewart points out the loop hole in the culture of life where on one hand stem cell research is wrong because it destroys life, yet the murder of Iraqis to promote democracy is okay. He pushes the subject further by calling for advocates of stem cell research to stop calling it stem cell research, but instead "The War on TERRORble Diseases."^v

"The Daily Show" has some skeptics, some of which from other media sources. Bill O'Reilly has come out against "The Daily Show." "Many Americans ages 18 to 24 have no idea what's going on," stating that they "get their news from Jon Stewart and their point of view from bomb-throwing entertainers." Bill O'Reilly said on an episode of his "O'Reilly Factor" which aired May 23.^{vi} O'Reilly lumps Stewart into a category with Hollywood actors and musical entertainers. Sure some people may share the same opinions as an actor or musician, but it's more likely that a person listens to the musician, because their music corresponds to a person's viewpoint. O'Reilly also criticizes the show for having an influence on presidential elections. "You know what's really frightening, you actually have an influence on this presidential election," O'Reilly said on a September 14, 2004 interview with Stewart on "The O'Reilly Factor." "It's true you have stoned slackers watching your dopey show every night and you can't stop them"^{vii} Stewart defends "The Daily Show" by mentioning the lead in to his show is puppets making prank calls, and also points out that his show is a comedy show while O'Reilly's show is a news program. Jon Stewart's show does intend to be a news show. The show functions as a media and governmental system critique. The majority of their content comes from events that have already been covered in the mainstream media. Even so, a September 2004 survey by National Annenberg Election Survey finds that viewers of "The Daily Show" are actually more informed than the average news viewer. Dannagal Goldthwaite Young, a senior analyst at the Annenberg Public Policy Center who conducted the research for this report said, "In fact, Daily Show viewers have higher campaign knowledge than national news viewers and newspaper readers - even when education, party identification, following politics, watching cable news, receiving campaign information online, age, and gender are taken into consideration."^{viii} So either Mr. O'Reilly made a false assertion that "Daily Show" viewers are stoned slackers, or that the stoned slackers who watch the show have higher campaign knowledge than the average 'non stoned slacker' news viewer.

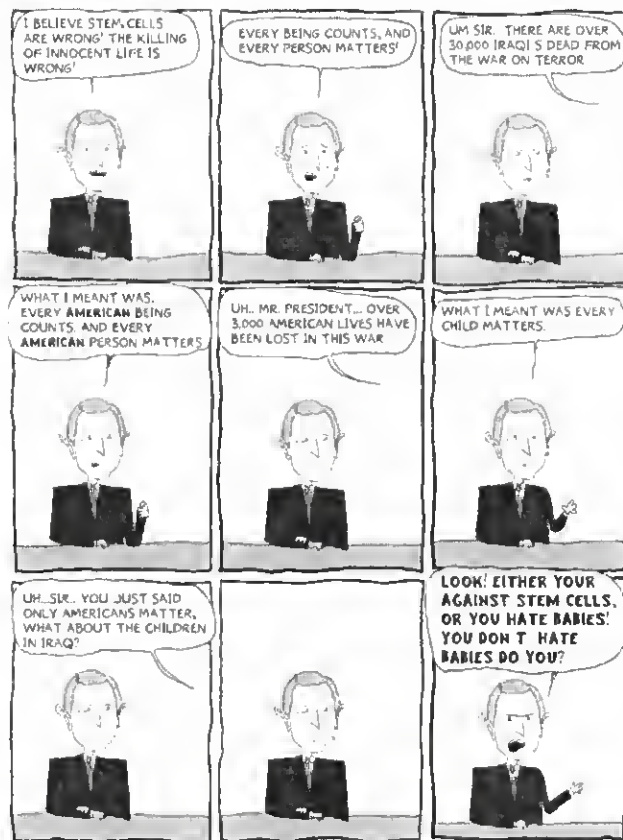
Stewart also speaks out against the partisan media, urging them to stop being part of politician's agendas. He made an appearance on the CNN program "Crossfire" with Paul Begala and Tucker Carlson. "I made a special effort to come on the show today, because I have, privately amongst my friends and also an occasional newspapers and television shows, mentioned that this show was bad," Stewart said to Begala and Carlson "I felt that that wasn't fair and I should come here and I should tell you it's not so much that it was bad as it's hurting America."^{ix}

Stewart urged the hosts to stop what they were doing and to come help him. He pointed out how the hosts have an agenda with the politicians that come on their show. "You're not too rough on them, you're part of your strategies, you're partisan, um what to do call it hacks," Stewart said.^x As the media declines into a state of total bias reporting, the American viewer suffers the most. Viewers must receive the facts before coming to a conclusion. When all they are fed is bias information they end up with bias conclusions. Stewart, though a Kerry supporter in 2004, runs "The Daily Show" without bias. Begala questioned Stewart on which candidate could provide the best material for his show. "That's kinda not how we look at, we look at the absurdity of the system provides us the most material and that is best served by the theater of it all, which by the way thank you both, because it's been helping," Stewart said.^{xi} Whoever the president may be, Jon Stewart will find ways to make them, unless of course America elects a president free of absurdities. Stewart stands up to the media not just on his show, but by actually appearing on the programs he is critiquing.



At the end of every "Daily Show," Jon Stewart interviews a guest, sometimes political, and other times not. On his Crossfire appearance, Stewart was criticized for not asking tough enough questions when he interviewed 2004 presidential candidate John Kerry. "Didn't you feel like you got the chance to interview the guy, why not ask him a real question, instead of just suck up to him," Tucker Carlson said.^{xii} On a recent episode of "The Daily Show" which aired September 18 Jon Stewart had former president Clinton on the program. Their interview focused on Clinton's global initiative. Stewart asked the former president to describe the initiative, whether private initiatives or being president was more effective, and whether politics prevented him from doing the things he wanted to do.^{xiii} All of these are legitimate interesting nonpartisan questions. On the other hand "Fox News Sunday's," Chris Wallace interviewed the former president on an episode, which aired September 24. Viewers saw a different side of the former president when Wallace asked the question on everyone's mind, or at least the viewers of his show. "When we announced that you were going to be on "Fox News Sunday," I got a lot of email from viewers, and I got to say I

Stem Cells



Connection



was surprised, most of them wanted to ask you this question: Why didn't you do more to put Bin Laden and Al Qaeda out of business when you were president," Wallace said.^{xiv} Clinton responded to the hostile question by taking a stand, similar to Stewart's "Crossfire" Appearance and told Wallace the facts. Clinton must have known such a question might come up, but he went on the show so he could take a fight back. The media decided to focus on Clinton's anger during the interview. Stewart poked fun at the Wallace interview on "The Daily Show" two days later, showing clips of mainstream media calling Clinton 'combative' during the Fox news interview.^{xv} The media chose to focus on making Clinton out to be a mad man instead, of focusing on what he was actually saying during his interview. Clinton like Stewart, took a stand against the current media.

Partisan media gives viewers the opinions before they get the facts. "The Daily Show" serves to remind watchers that today's media and government are absurd. The media's job is to give the facts. Through the facts show something that could be absurd, in a way acting as a check on the government. With the media falling in to partisan reporting, the media itself needs to be checked, and that's where Jon Stewart comes in.

Notes

i The Daily Show, Perf. Jon Stewart, Comedy Central, 5 Oct. 2006.

ii Ibid.

iii Ibid.

iv The Daily Show, Perf. Jon Stewart, Comedy Central, 7 Jul. 2006.

v Ibid.

vi The O'Reilly Factor, Perf. Bill O'Reilly, Fox News, 23 May. 2006.

vii The O'Reilly Factor, Perf. Bill O'Reilly, Fox News 24 Sept. 2004.

viii Dannagal Goldthwaite Young, "Late Night Knowledge" Annenberg Public Policy Center, September 2004, University of Pennsylvania, 12 Oct. 2006< http://www.annenbergpublicpolicycenter.org/naes/2004_03_late-night-knowledge-2_9-21_pr.pdf>

ix Crossfire, Perf. John Stewart, Tucker Carlson, CNN, 15 Oct. 2004.

x Ibid.

xi Ibid.

xii Ibid.

xiii The Daily Show, Perf. John Stewart, Comedy Central, 18 Sept. 2006.

xiv Fox News Sunday, Perf. Chris Wallace, Fox News, 24 Sept. 2006.

xv The Daily Show, Perf. John Stewart, Comedy Central, 26 Sept. 2006.

More Pundits!



news in a frantic way. Whether this is to cover up 'Operation Iraqi Freedom' or because Americans are finally concerned with the unaided atrocities in Darfur should not be what we debate. Both Iraq and Darfur need effective aid, but unfortunately giving support is easier said than done.

This essay has resulted in a discouraging debate on what the United States' actions should be concerning Darfur, Iraq, and genocide in general. Although I believe the United States should help its own first, as a leading power, I feel we should take more action in helping Darfur. America should no doubt have stronger policy and presence in areas experiencing genocide. As a world power, it seems that the United States should help the helpless. The question of how the country will do this lingers on. The United States, or any other Nation for that matter, does not, truly, have an effective prevention or discontinuance tactic for genocide. There is no easy answer to this problem.

I can understand the United States' hesitation to aid in other international affairs, considering that we are preoccupied with "Operation Iraqi Freedom." But, I am extremely disturbed with America's history of inaction concerning genocide. This history makes me question, 'Are we avoiding genocide?' Or, are we legitimately too engrossed in *other* international affairs to aid Darfur? It seems that the United States' involvement with Darfur is a case of both priority and of its ongoing trend of staying at arms length from genocide issues.

Notes

- 1 Reeves, Eric, "Information and Expert Analysis." Darfur: A Genocide We Can Stop, 2006. www.darfurgenocide.org.
- 2 Kaplan, Lawrence, "Iraq, Darfur, and American Power, Crisis Intervention." The New Republic Online. April 24, 2006. www.tnr.com.
- 3 Kaplan, Lawrence.
- 4 Leupp, Gary, "Out of Iraq, Into Darfur" Just Saying No to Imperial Intervention in Sudan, *Bounds Magazine*, 2006.
- 5 Power, Samantha, "A Problem from Hell"/ America and the Age of Genocide, Harper Perennial, 2002.
- 6 Payasian, Simon, "The United States Response to the Armenian Genocide," *Looking Backward, Moving Forward: Confronting the Armenian Genocide*, ed. Richard G. Hovannisian, New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Publishers, 2003, pp. 51-80, 2003.
- 7 Payasian, Simon.
- 8 Valentino, Benjamin A. *Final Solutions/ Mass Killing and Genocide in the 20th Century*, Cornell University Press, 2004.
- 9 Power, Samantha.
- 10 Reeves, Eric.
- 11 Reeves, Eric.
- 12 "Mr. Bush and Genocide," The Washington Post, Sunday, February 12, 2006, p. B06.

Operation Iraqi Freedom, Darfur, and Genocide: A Case of Priority, or a Flaw in History?

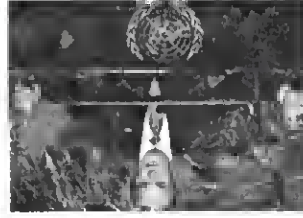
By Alexa Karabin

My grandmother was born within the midst of massacre. I learned the meaning of atrocity, tragedy, brutality, and evil from her stories of our family's turnmoil. A fascination with these accounts of genocide interested me, especially as I learned that America has had limited policy and response to countries committing genocide. As I read more about the genocide in Darfur, I have become increasingly frustrated by America's lack of intervention, which parallels its involvement in past genocides. In the twentieth century alone, the Ottoman slaughter of the Armenians, the Bosnian Serbs' eradication of non-Serbs, the Nazi Holocaust, Pol Pot's terror in Cambodia, Saddam Hussein's destruction of Kurds in northern Iraq, and the Rwandan Hutus' systematic extermination of the Tutsi minority, are among the few that were neglected by our government and, in most cases, continue to be blind-spots in history. But, as I read about the Darfurian genocide, it becomes apparent that United States' presence in Iraq, most likely, has covered up the slaughter occurring in Darfur, or at least moved it into the background of National priority. The United States is not strongly investing itself in Darfur and is using Iraq as its excuse for evasion. I speculate whether this is really a case of priority, or a flaw in history that is tarnishing our present.

Coincidentally, the war in Iraq started the same time as the crisis in Darfur. In Darfur, within the past 3 years more than 2 million people, which is a third of Darfur's population, have been driven from their homes. An estimated 400,000 lives have been taken. Aid is slow, so genocide persists. We must remember the genocide in Iraq. Before Darfur, Saddam Hussein's government committed mass slaughter of the Kurds within Iraq. He is on trial for these crimes at this moment. There was and still is a crisis in Iraq, and these atrocities are comparable with the violence that is going on in Darfur. If the United States gets involved in Darfur it could turn into another "quagmire," as many have labeled "Operation Iraqi Freedom." Would "Operation Darfurian Freedom" result in killing 48,000-plus civilians? Would intervention be worth this additional body count? Slogans from the Save Darfur Coalition scream out at the United States,

few Americans press for intervention, so America's waiting game then begins, and genocide continues unhindered by United States action.

The U.S. government has not completely ignored the problem in Darfur. In 2004, the administration attempted to put pressure on Sudan's government by means of the U.N. resolutions. In late 2004, the administration began to emphasize the help that might come from the African Union force. In 2005, the administration planned on negotiating settlement between Sudan's government and Darfur's dissuited rebels. None of these actions have worked and it seems, as we look back on our history with dealing with genocide, none of these actions are going to work in the future. In



Two summers ago, President Bush reaffirmed his belief that genocide was occurring in Sudan. In 2004, Bush's administration sent investigators to interview victims of Darfur's violence. Based on these interviews, the administration accused Sudan's government of genocide. This is the first time a government has staged such an accusation since the U.N. Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide was adopted in 1948. In

From 2005 until earlier this year, the Bush administration and its allies believed they could stop the Darfurian genocide by sending in African Union forces. General Annan spoke about the effectiveness of these troops back in February, saying, "They didn't have the large numbers that would have been required for a region the size of Darfur. They didn't have logistical support. They didn't have the nobility, either on ground or in the air."¹² Once again, the United States failed to effectively help Darfur.

Through my reading, I have studied opinions that believe the war in Iraq has been eclipsing the crisis in Darfur. What is more worrisome is the belief that the coverage of Darfur is being used to distract us from the war in Iraq. The crisis in Darfur has been going on for many years, but only more recently has been making

the President, and the passerby. "A call to your conscience; Save Darfur!" "Take action now." "The Save Darfur Coalition is a leading group for organizations that intend to save Darfur. They demand intervention in Sudan, but their tactic seems un-



realistic and contradictory. The group intends to save Darfur, not by urging the Bush administration to launch air militias, but by petitioning the White House to strengthen funding for the African Union peacekeepers, and to lobby the United Nations. They criticize the Bush administration for employing U.S. military power in Iraq, without due respect to the opinion of the international community and against nations that pose no imminent threat to our own. Many of Darfur's advocates have come to view that United States' power and aid is tainted by self-interest. What these protesting organizations fail to consider, is that to save Darfur, America will have to use the very tactics that

they are criticizing. ² It is unlikely that the African Union will stop the killings in Darfur, as its Islamic members have blocked the Union's force at every turn. The United Nations has also failed to aid in the crisis. The U.N. amounts, first and foremost, to a collection of sovereign states, many of which are adamantly opposed to violating Sudan's own sovereignty. Given the tears of entanglement expressed by its European members, NATO has not intervened either. ³

Advocates for Darfur want to halt the persecution of innocents. These activists have enshrined the biblical admonition not to "stand idly by the blood of thy neighbor" as their motto, bining against a reflexive opposition to the only power that can actually do so. Journalist Lawrence F. Kaplan, states in the article *Iraq, Darfur, and American Power, Crisis Intervention*, "...it is as if nothing has been learned and nothing remembered from the decade that went before. Never mind Bosnia. Never mind Kosovo. And, as long as Darfur activists like number two Senate Democrat Dick Durbin of Illinois cling to the mantra that the U.S. must be what he calls a "defensive nation," well never mind Darfur either."



National Book Critics Circle Award Winner

SAMANTHA POWER

Crimes concerning genocide have occurred all over the world. The victims have been members of a range of races and religions. All of these cases of genocide vary in capacity, but each of them met the 1948 genocide convention's

terms of what genocide entails: killing members of a group; causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; destruction in whole or in part; imposing measures intended to prevent births within a group; forcibly transferring children of the group to another group. The article states that any persons committing genocide shall be punished, whether they are constitutional ally responsible rulers, public officials or private individuals.⁸ Few have followed these guidelines or offered the consequences. Every time genocide occurs, the U.S. has options for meaningful, diplomatic, economic, legal, or military intervention. Samantha Power asks, "How would America and its allies respond if the same crimes had been committed in a different place... against different victims... or at a different time?"

After talking with some American's who have witnessed several of these genocides pass, and have watched the United States' interaction with international affairs involving crimes of genocide, defense for the United States seems by declining that the "United States was not aware of the volume of atrocity," or "there was nothing the United States could have done to help." In Samantha Power's book, she has found that the U.S. policymakers knew a great deal about the crimes being committed. The United States had countless opportunities to mitigate and prevent mass killings.

Power notices a recurring count of events with America and its reaction to genocide. First early warnings of mass slaughter proliferate; propaganda escalates as massacres and deportations start; United States policymakers struggle to wrap their minds around the horrors occurring; media coverage proliferates and refugee stories and press reports of atrocity become too numerous to deny. Very

Holocaust, during the Cold War and after Vietnam. Bosnia and Rwanda ensued after the Cold War, while American supremacy was at a high point. At this time, awareness of the lessons of the Holocaust was at its height.

Every American president in the last three decades has made decisions related to the prevention of genocide. But even though they have all stood on the podium, as Samantha Power, author of *A Problem from Hell: America and the Age of Genocide*, says, "U.S. policy responses to genocide were astonishingly similar across time, geography, ideology, and geopolitical balance." America's response to genocide has changed very little from its initial response, during the Armenian genocide.

Former President Clinton is quoted as saying, "If the horrors of the Holocaust taught us anything, it is the high cost of remaining silent and paralyzed in the face of genocide." During a speech at the opening of the Holocaust Museum, when referring to the United States' inaction during World War II, Clinton said, "Even as our fragmentary awareness of crimes grew into indisputable facts, far too little was done. We must not permit this to happen again."

In her book, Samantha Power, utters in response to these quotes, "...America's can-do spirit never grappled with the fact that the country had done nothing, practically or politically, to prepare itself to respond to genocide. The commitment proved hollow in the face of actual slaughter."

Presidential Responses to Genocide

In the memory of the Holocaust, Jimmy Carter is quoted as saying, "we must forge an unshakable oath with all civilized people that never again will the world stand silent, never again will the world fail to act in time to prevent this terrible crime of genocide."

Ronald Reagan declared, five years after Carter's quote, "Like you, I saw in a forthright voice, 'Never again!'"

George Bush Sr. said after his visit to Auschwitz, that the visit had left him, "the determination, not just to remember, but also to act"

In an article by author, Professor Gary Leupp, which addresses a point of view that is shared with other individuals concerning U.S. aid in Darfur, speaks of antiwar marches with demonstrators holding signs saying "Out of Iraq, into Darfur." He describes a contradiction in "opposing imperialist military deployment in Iraq and supporting it in Sudan." But Leupp also, "hasn't much studied the situation in Darfur." He doesn't believe there is a genocide occurring in Darfur; he believes we are using the "alleged 'genocide' ... to divert attention from the ongoing slaughter in Iraq."⁴ There is no doubt an ongoing slaughter in Iraq, but I wonder if Leupp has this in the wrong order. Is the war in Iraq diverting attention away from the atrocities in Darfur?

The question of considering whether to leave Iraq, and invade Darfur, is where a contradiction reveals itself. If America leaves Iraq in the dust and enters Darfur, it will cause a public outcry, perhaps similar to what is currently happening with Iraq. Iraq will be left in shambles and war and conflict will resume, just as it did in Bosnia.

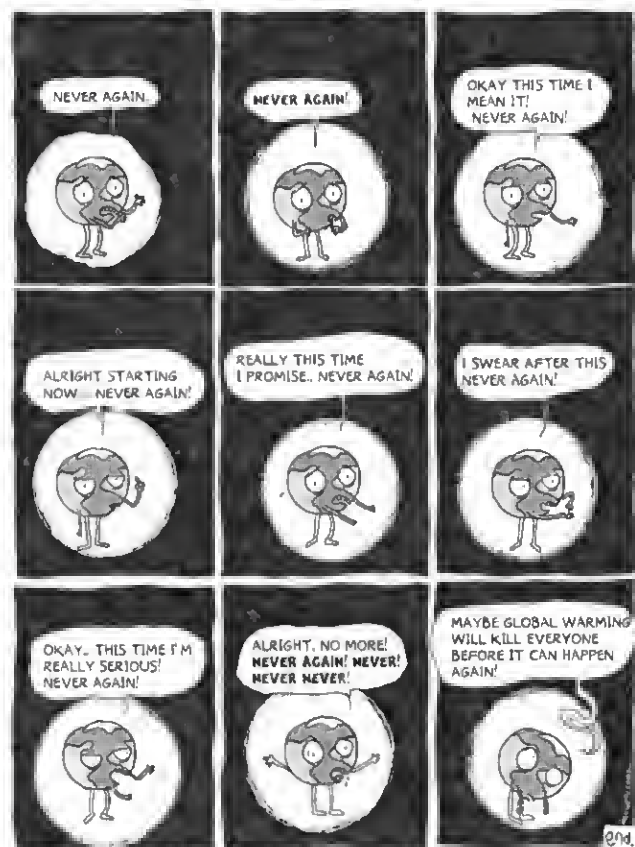
As genocide persisted in Bosnia during the mid 90's, President Bill Clinton took the stand saying, "Anyone, shelling Sarajevo must... be prepared to deal with the consequences." NATO came to save the day, or so Sarajevo's residents thought. In response to America's perceived commitment, Sarajevo's residents gradually adjusted to life under NATO's protection. After a few months Sarajevo started to rekindle, but this "protection" proved itself to be imperfect. American resolve disintegrated. Saving Bosnian lives was not considered worth risking U.S. soldiers or challenging America's European allies who wanted to remain neutral. Clinton and his administration shifted from the language of genocide to that of "tragedy" and "civil war," downplaying public expectations that there was anything the United States could do. The United States' "assist" in Bosnia, was the most involved the country has ever gotten with cases of genocide.⁵

America's Response to Genocide

"... The Armenian massacre was the greatest crime of the war, and the failure to act against Turkey is to condone it... the failure to deal radically with the Turkish horror means that all talk of guaranteeing the future peace of the world is mischievous nonsense."

-Theodore Roosevelt, May 11, 1918

Never Again



At the start of WWI, the Ottoman Empire joined the Central Powers and declared a Jihad against the Allied Powers. The Young Turk government of the Ottoman Empire became threatened by the desire of an independent state from the ethnic Christian Armenians. To insure that the Armenians did not pursue an independent state, they carried out a deliberate genocidal plan to annihilate the Armenian people across the empire. In a book by historian Simon Payaslian, *Looking the other Way*, the author discusses how the United States government, while aware of the atrocities occurring in the Ottoman Empire, chose not to intervene in this genocidal disaster. Payaslian presumes that the U.S. government was hesitant to intervene, because of the risk of losing a long-standing trade relationship with the Ottoman Empire. America's interest in this region was expanding with the growing number of companies, increasing U.S. business from the early nineteenth century to the late nineteenth century. These companies included Standard Oil, Singer Sewing Machine, and the American Tobacco Company. The U.S. need for oil became more pronounced, as oil became the favored alternative to coal. 6

At the time, the United States desired to maintain friendly trade relationships. Under President Woodrow Wilson, the country followed the policy of non-interference and neutrality during the first half of the WWI. Wilson hoped to serve as a mediator and peacemaker between the Central and Allied Powers. Taking action against Turkey would compromise that neutrality. The Wilson Administration was also concerned with reelection, causing the president not to take big risks that would jeopardize good press. 7 Our government's choice and the nation's choice not to act against Turkey, allowed a slaughter of more than 1.5 million Armenians.

"We-even we here-hold the power, and bear the responsibility."

-Abraham Lincoln

The genocide of Armenians was not the last genocide, nor was it the last genocide that was downplayed by the American government and other World Powers. The Armenian genocide occurred during World War I, before the United States became a world leader, and the Jewish Holocaust occurred while it was approaching this role. After this time, America said "never again" will we let this happen to another nation. But the Cambodian and Iraqi genocides followed the